

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-08

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, UY , US

SUBJ: EXCESS TRAINING AMMUNITION FOR THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES

CINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MVD 453; STATE 028424

1. SUMMARY: OUR POLICY OF NOT OFFERING AMMUNITION FROM

EXCESS US STOCKS THROUGH THE MIMEX PROGRAM TO THE URUGUAYAN
ARMED FORCES IS REVIEWED. ACTION REQUESTED: WE
REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT' S VIEWS AND GUIDANCE ON THIS MATTER.
END SUMMARY

2. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, IT HAS BEEN THIS MISSION' S
POLICY SINCE LATE 1969, NOT TO MAKE MIMEX OFFERS OF EXCESS
TRAINING AMMUNITION TO THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES, BUT RATHER
INSIST THAT NECESSARY AMMUNITION STOCKS BE PURCHASED BY THEM.
THIS POLICY WAS ESTABLISHED BY AMBASSADOR ADAIR WITH THE
DEPARTMENT' S CONCURRENCE AND WAS DESIGNED TO LESSEN THE
POSSIBILITY THAT MARXIST AND OTHER OPPOSITION ELEMENTS HERE
COULD CHARGE THE USG WITH PROVIDING THE GOU AMMUNITION TO
" KILL OTHER URUGUAYANS", IN CIVIL DISORDERS. EXCEPTIONS
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TO THIS POLICY WERE APPROVED IN MID-1972 WHEN THE GREATLY INCREASED ACTIVITIES OF THE ARMED FORCES IN INTERNAL SECURITY CAUSED AMMUNITION STOCKS TO FALL TO A CRITICAL POINT. THESE EXCEPTIONS WERE GRANTED ON THE BASIS OF WRITTEN ASSURANCES FROM THE RESPECTIVE SERVICES THAT SUCH AMMUNITION AS PROVIDED FROM EXCESS STOCKS WOULD BE UTILIZED FOR TRAINING ONLY.

3. DESPITE AMMUNITION PROVIDED UNDER LAST YEAR'S " EXCEPTIONS", THE GREATLY INCREASED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES, PRINCIPALLY THE ARMY, HAVE AGAIN CREATED SERIOUS SHORTAGES IN CERTAIN AMMUNITION STOCKS. TO MEET THESE SHORTAGES THE GOU SOUGHT (AND RECEIVED) APPROVAL FROM THE DEPARTMENT IN FEBRUARY FOR THE PURCHASE OF APPROXIMATELY ELEVEN MILLION ROUNDS OF ASSORTED .30 AND .45 CALIBRE AMMUNITION. HOWEVER, ARMED FORCES NOW WANTS TO COMPLEMENT THIS AMMUNITION PURCHASE THROUGH MIMEX. S THE RESULT OF RECENT EVENTS HERE WHICH GIVE OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM A SPECIAL POLITICAL SENSITIVITY THE GVV DESIRE FOR MIMEX AMMUNITION HAS LED US TO REVIEW THIS POLICY.

4. URUGUAYAN MILITARY PROBABLY AWARE THAT OTHER COUNTRIES IN THIS AREA RECEIVE EXCESS AMMUNITION UNDER MIMEX PROGRAM. POINT IS MADE THAT GOU WILL UTILIZE FMS CREDITS FOR THE PURCHASE OF APPROXIMATELY SIX MILLION ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION DUE HERE DURING THE ANNUAL FALL VISIT OF THE U. S. MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND AMMUNITION SHIP. GOU FINANCIAL RESOURCES ARE LIMITED AND CONCERN IS EXPRESSED THAT LARGE- SCALE AMMUNITION PURCHASES WILL UTILIZE CREDITS AND/ OR DOLLAR RESERVES FOR OTHER THAN CAPITAL ITEMS WHICH HAVE A LONGER LIFE- SPAN. URUGUAYAN MILITARY BELIEVE THE MIMEX PROGRAM SHOULD BE UTILIZED, AS IT IS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, TO MAKE UP THE SHORTFALL BETWEEN THEIR PURCHASES AND THEIR BASIC TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. SIGNS OF SOME IRRITATION ABOUT THEIR INABILITY TO USE THE MIMEX ROUTE HAVE ALREADY APPEARED. URUGUAYAN MILITARY ARE SUPER- SENSITIVE IN EQUATING UNAVAILABLY MORE MIMEX AMMUNITION WITH SOME LATENT SUSPICIONS THAT THE USG OPPOSES THE NEW ROLE WHICH THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES HAVE ASSUMED IN URUGUAY.

5. WE WOULD OPPOSE EFFORTS TO " FORCE" US TO ASSIST THE MILITARY IN RETURN FOR THEIR " GOOD WILL". HOWEVER, WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THEIR DESIRE TO GET THE MOST OUT OF LIMITED DEFENSE FUNDS. SOME COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS CONSIDER IT DEBATABLE WHETHER OR

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NOT A POLICY OF " RETAILING" AMMUNITION (UNDER CASH SALESOR

FMS CREDITS), INSTEAD OF " WHOLSESALING" SUCH AMMUNITION UNDER
MIMEX, REALLY PROTECTS THE USG FROM OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WHO
SEEK TO CLAIM THAT MAP REPRESENTS U. S. AID TO " REPRESSION".
A FURTHER POINT IS FACTOR THAT US IS THE ORIGIN OF ALL
WEAPONS WHICH WILL USE AMMUNITION.

6. IN SUMMARY, WE RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT CONCUR IN THE RE-
SUMPTION OF A MODEST MIMEX TC BINING AMMUNITION PROGRAM HERE
TO COMPLEMENT THE GOU
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